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May 30, 1996

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Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 "M" Street N.W.-Room 222  
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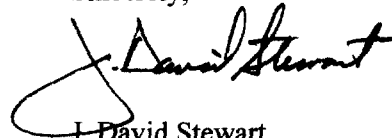
Endorsement of ALA Comments in Response To:  
**Universal Service Proceeding: CC Docket No. 96-45**

The Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization (ILCSO), a nationally recognized statewide library consortium consisting of 44 academic libraries and the Illinois State Library, and the University of Illinois as a member organization, endorse the American Library Association's response to the FCC regarding the provisions for universal service under the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

The provision and cost of telecommunications services significantly impact the level and quality of library services that ILCSO member libraries are able to provide to a statewide constituency of over 2,500 Illinois libraries. In providing access to information, libraries need a reliable direct connection to Internet services with sufficient bandwidth to support multimedia electronic applications at a cost that is affordable from individual telecommunications carriers. Given the importance of serving patrons in rural areas and other locations remote from the library, the costs of providing Internet access are critically important to Illinois libraries. For these reasons, we believe it is imperative for Internet connections to be included in the definition of basic universal service with discounted costs or tariffs for colleges, universities, schools and libraries that qualify as tax-exempt organizations.

Please consider these views as you formulate the basic universal service provisions under the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



J. David Stewart  
Assistant Vice President  
for Planning and Budgeting



Bradley D. Baker, President, ILCSO and  
University Librarian, Northeastern Illinois  
University

FCC9645

cc: Ms. Sally Benson, ALA  
ILCSO Policy Council Members  
Sue Stroyan, President ILA

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Date: Wed, 24 Apr 1996 18:01:36 -0400  
 From: ALAWASH E-MAIL <ALAWASH@ALAWASH.ORG>  
 To: ala-wo@ala.org  
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April 24, 1996

American Library Association Washington Office Newsline

In this issue:

REPLY COMMENTS ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROCEEDING DUE ON MAY 7  
 OUTLINE OF ALA RESPONSE TO FCC NPRM ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE

#### REPLY COMMENTS ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROCEEDING DUE ON MAY 7

ALA is preparing Reply Comments in the FCC's Universal Service Proceeding, Docket 96-45. This is a continuation of the formal comments filed during the week of April 10 as part of the FCC's implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Groups and individuals CAN FILE reply comments even if they did not file comments during the initial comment phase.

ALA and several other library agencies or associations filed individual formal comments. ALA also filed as part of a K-12 education/library coalition. (See ALAWON, Vol. 5, No. 16, April 4, 1996, for a previous report on these filings.) ALA's comments were endorsed by the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), and the Urban Libraries Council (ULC).

Library agencies and associations filing their own comments included: the Alaska Library Association, the California Library Association, the California State Library, the Library of Michigan, the Michigan Library Association, the Lincoln Trails Library System (Illinois), SAILOR -- the Maryland Library Network, the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, the Warren (Pa.) Library Association, and the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. In addition, information policy and library science researcher, Dr. Charles McClure, filed for Syracuse University.

Altogether there were more than 200 different filings submitted. Other groups filing included OMB Watch, the American Federation of Teachers and industry representatives from cable tv, long distance, wireless, regional Bells, and other telephone companies and associations.

ALA is now reviewing these materials to prepare reply comments due on May 7. Other library organizations, associations and individual library advocates are encouraged to submit reply comments or letters in this latest phase.

EMPHASIS: Advocates can submit reply comments and letters even if they did not file in the comment period. This will not necessarily be the case if the proceedings go into additional phases or "replies to the replies" in this particular universal service proceeding. Interested librarians and library supporters can also contribute to ALA's reply comments by sending examples of leading edge library usage to REPLIES@ALAWASH.ORG or to the Washington Office by fax. (For background information on this issue and request for input, please see ALAWON, Vol. 5, No. 14, March 22, 1996.)

Additional materials on ALA's activities and other information related to the FCC-Joint Board proceedings on universal service are also available on the ALA gopher/web site. Instructions on how to file are available at this electronic site as well:

<http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oitp/univserv.html>

ENDORSEMENTS WELCOME: ALA requests that endorsements and letters of support for the ALA filing be sent to the FCC by the May 7 deadline. Organizations that wish to be

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cc:

Sally  
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: endorse ALA

Office of the Secretary  
 FCC  
 1919 M. Street NW  
 Room 2054  
 D.C. 20554

1301 1301 reference 96-45

listed as endorsing the separate ALA filing are encouraged to contact Andrew Magpantay at ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy -- oitp@alawash.org, or 202-628-8421; fax 202-628-8424.

Library advocates should include examples of telecommunications services and library applications from their local communities or describe special applications or needs of a particular region or jurisdiction. Key points that could be endorsed are included in the outline below.

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#### **OUTLINE OF ALA RESPONSE TO FCC NPRM ON UNIVERSAL SERVICE**

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 mandates for the first time, that libraries and schools be considered universal service providers. Major points of the ALA filing include:

- \* An expansive definition of discounted services for libraries and schools which includes all telecommunications services available commercially or by tariff or through contract.
- \* A discount rate which is similar to a wholesale price and covers the cost of the service or the lowest cost available. This discount rate would be based on the Total Service Long Run Incremental Costs (TS-LRIC) of a service.
- \* Libraries and schools in rural, insular and high-cost areas should receive deeper discounts because of the special barriers to affordable connections.
- \* Core universal services for the residential consumers should be defined, at the very least, as the level of technology required for entry level access to the Internet.
- \* Certification and eligibility requirements should not be onerous, provide accountability, and include libraries and schools that participate in appropriate cooperative network arrangements.

THANKS FOR INPUT: ALA appreciates all the comments and input received from libraries and library supporters. The examples of library applications, the questions about such issues as reselling and the many other points contributed and assisted ALA with its filing. And, thanks to all the library groups that filed comments at the FCC. Additional input from the field is encouraged during this phase and in future proceedings. Thanks to everyone and keep it up!

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April 5, 1996

Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Comments in Response To:  
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order Establishing Joint Board  
(FCC 96-93; CC Docket No. 96-45)

Lincoln Trail Libraries System is a state sponsored organization serving the libraries of 116 members in East Central Illinois. Academic, public, school, and special libraries participate as members. Lincoln Trail member facilities are spread over approximately 250 buildings in a nine county area. This area is largely rural. The median population served for participating school districts is 795, and the median size for participating public libraries is 3,402. The median budget of all participating libraries is \$54,000, with some annual budgets as low as less than \$10,000 per year. We would like to share with you our perceptions of the changes in providing library service in this largely rural area and the role of our libraries in their communities. The provision of telecommunication services and the cost of those services significantly impacts the services libraries are able to provide.

As more and more information is available in a digital format, libraries need to provide patrons with access to this information. The role of the library in a community is to provide access to information. This includes serving the needs of businesses to connect to current financial data, of students of all ages to connect to instructional resources, and of individuals to assess product information, influence legislation, or further their knowledge on a subject. Libraries face a growing challenge to provide continuing education opportunities within their communities. This is required for individuals to stay up-to-date with new developments and retrain for new jobs. To provide patrons with this information, each library needs a direct connection to an Internet provider that will allow them to access up-to-the-minute information for their patrons. A dial access connection is not sufficient for the bandwidth required to download large full-text files, or to use graphic and video resources. Libraries need stable connections that can provide quality images quickly. Also, libraries need to be able to support multiple simultaneous users from their facilities.

There are several major trends affecting changes in library services. One is the move toward more and more information being disseminated in digital format. It used to be that libraries purchased copies of materials to be housed in their facilities and available for use from there. Now libraries are finding the need to access information when it is requested from an originating source. This allows access to the more current information. Access to information is now sold rather than physical copies of information being available for sale. This trend is evident in many areas, such as the availability of federal government information via electronic access from the Government Printing Office. These trends include access to agricultural and agri-business data.

Another trend is the need to serve patrons at remote locations from the library. This means that libraries need to provide access to their resources, particularly the resources they obtain in electronic format, via dial access or the Internet. Libraries perceive that there is the need for all patrons, including both business and residential users, to have at least a dial access Internet connection that will allow a patron to

connect to library databases and download resources. The availability of library resources on the Internet is no longer limited to browsing remote library catalogs. All patrons should have an Internet Service Provider within local calling range, so that long distance charges are not incurred to use publicly available information sources.

The access described above is currently available in many urban areas, and that access is growing. It is no longer an option because of changing trends in publishing and information distribution formats for small rural libraries to provide traditional services. All libraries and their patrons need these electronic access services for their communities to remain viable. A model where each location can have Internet access will best serve needs in the long run. Therefore, we believe it is imperative for Internet connections to be included in basic universal service. The higher demand of libraries is that their buildings have direct dedicated connections that can support multiple users.

Please consider these needs as you formulate basic universal service for all Americans. In addition, please consider the limited budgets of our libraries. Not only is it a challenge to make these services available in all locations, it will be a challenge to make them affordable to all consumers. We believe at the very least that libraries with a tax exempt status should be able to be exempted from paying taxes on their telecommunication services.

Sincerely,

LINCOLN TRAIL LIBRARIES SYSTEM

Anne Wendler  
Consultant

Attachment: Lincoln Trail map with list of participating libraries

xc: International Transcription Service

## **LEARN THE FACTS ABOUT: LEARNET**

*Informal information on the FCC's proceedings that impact education.*

On February 8, President Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This law represents the first comprehensive update of our communications laws in more than 60 years. Among other things, this new law will help schools and libraries obtain access to state of the art services and technologies. Read on to get an informal overview of what the new law says, what the FCC must do to implement it, and how you can get involved. You will also find information on other FCC proceedings that could impact education.

### **THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996: ENSURING ACCESS FOR SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES**

#### **I. Universal Service: Section 254**

##### **A. Broad Principles**

The "universal service" system was originally designed to make basic telephone service available to all Americans at reasonable prices. In many cases, universal service policies have required that rates for certain telecommunications services be set above the cost of providing those services in order to generate a subsidy that could be used to reduce the price of local service to residential customers. Many other federal and state programs are presently used to ensure "universal service."

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 calls for a revision of the universal service system. The revision must expand both the base of companies that will contribute to offset telecommunications service rates and the category of customers who will benefit from discounts. Schools, libraries, and health care providers as well as residential and rural customers will be the primary universal service beneficiaries.

The new law requires that the FCC and the states base the revision of the universal service system on seven principles, including the principle that elementary and secondary schools, libraries, and health care providers should have access to advanced telecommunications services.

##### **B. The Snowe-Rockefeller-Exon-Kerrey Provision**

In addition to the seven broad principles, a provision of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that was sponsored by Senators Olympia Snowe, Jay Rockefeller, James Exon, and Bob Kerrey directly addresses schools' and libraries' access to telecommunications services. Their provision specifies that, upon request, individual telecommunications carriers must provide service to schools and libraries at "affordable" rates. The amount of the associated discount is to be reimbursed by the newly established universal service system that is required

by the 1996 Act.

### **C. The Universal Service Proceeding**

On March 8, 1996 the FCC adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Universal Service Proceeding. To access the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, [click here](#). Comments on this proposal were due April 12, 1996, reply comments on May 7, 1996. (Skip ahead for an explanation of the FCC's decision-making process.)

You can still participate in this proceeding even if you didn't file comments or reply comments! If you would like to talk to members of the Joint Board or their staffs directly, you may set up an appointment to do so. You can get a list of their names by calling (202) 418-0190. If you do speak to one of the members of the Joint Board, you will be required to submit a summary of your conversation to the FCC's Office of the Secretary, at (202) 418-0304 under proceeding Docket number 96-45. We encourage all interested parties to participate in this proceeding. You may wish to contact your local schools and libraries, your local School Board, or your local and state elected officials.

## **II. Advanced Telecommunications Incentives: Section 706**

### **A. Overview**

Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 requires the FCC to conduct regular inquiries to see that advanced telecommunications are in fact becoming accessible. If the FCC finds that they are not, it must accelerate the deployment of advanced services by removing barriers to investment and promoting competition. The FCC is required to use its regulatory tools to encourage the deployment of advanced telecommunications to all Americans, including, in particular, elementary and secondary schools and classrooms.

In other words, the FCC must act to ensure that cutting edge telecommunications technology is available in schools -- and classrooms in those schools -- around the country on an ongoing basis. The FCC proceedings listed below are part of the implementation of Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

### **B. Current Proceedings that Incorporate Section 706**

On April 9, 1996 the FCC began a "Cable Reform" proceeding regarding the regulation of cable television services. The FCC is asking for comment on how to advance the goals laid out under Section 706 within the context of cable services regulation. Comments on this proceeding are due by June 4, 1996. Reply comments are due June 28, 1996. To read the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for this proceeding, [click here](#).

On April 19, 1996 the FCC began a "Local Competition" proceeding to implement the provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 related to competition in the provision of

local telephone service. Again, the FCC asked for comment on how to advance the goals laid out under Section 706 within the context of encouraging local competition. Comments on this proceeding were due on May 16, 1996. Reply comments are due May 30, 1996. To read the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for this proceeding, [click here](#).

## OTHER EDUCATION-RELATED PROCEEDINGS

On May 6, 1996 the FCC issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in response to petitions filed by Apple Computer, Inc. and WINForum, that seeks comment on making spectrum available for use of new unlicensed equipment called NII/SUPERNet devices. The proposal is relevant to schools since these devices could help link classrooms to the Internet by wireless means, thus providing schools an alternative to installing wires in classrooms. Comment and reply comment due dates have not yet been determined. [Click here](#) to get a copy of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

## HOW DOES THE FCC MAKE DECISIONS?

A "proceeding" is the process by which the FCC implements a section of a law or responds to suggestions raised by the public. The FCC usually begins a proceeding by issuing one of two types of public documents -- a Notice of Inquiry (NOI), which tends to be very broad, or a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), which seeks comment on more developed ideas. These documents list deadlines for both comments and reply comments on the issues they raise. Through reply comments, parties may respond to the comments filed by others. (You may submit reply comments even if you did not file comments.)

The public is encouraged to read and respond to NOIs, NPRMs and other Commission documents. You can make your own copies of FCC documents at the Public Reference Center in room 230, 1919 M Street NW from 9:00-4:30 daily. Or, for a fee, you can order copies from the FCC's independent contractor, ITS, at (202) 857-3800. In the case of the Universal Service Proceeding, you can get a copy of the NPRM by calling (202) 418-0190 or [click here](#). Lists of those who submitted comments and reply comments as well as copies of the comments themselves are available from both the Public Reference Center and ITS.

Call (202) 418-0190 to get instructions on how to file formal comments or reply comments. If you prefer to send your comments via electronic mail, they will be classified as "informal." Informal comments should be sent to [LearNet@fcc.gov](mailto:LearNet@fcc.gov).

After considering comments and reply comments, the FCC usually writes a Report and Order, which can contain rules pertaining to issues raised in the NPRM. Usually, a proceeding is finalized by the FCC's Commissioners, (at present the FCC has four Commissioners), who vote either to adopt or reject a Report and Order.

In the case of the Universal Service proceeding, discussed above, the



Telecommunications Act of 1996 directs the FCC to convene a federal-state "Joint Board" to advise the FCC on how universal service issues, including those related to schools, should be addressed. The Joint Board consists of three FCC Commissioners, four State Public Utility Commissioners, and one consumer utility advocate. The Joint Board will make recommendations to the FCC which the FCC will consider in adopting a final decision. You can get a list of the members of the Joint Board by calling (202) 418-0190.

### IMPORTANT DATES FOR FCC EDUCATION PROCEEDINGS

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| May 30, 1996                   | Reply comments on the Local Competition NPRM are due.   |
| June 4, 1996                   | Comments on the Cable Reform NPRM are due.  |
| June 28, 1996                  | Reply comments on the Cable Reform NPRM are due.  |
| November 8, 1996               | Joint Board makes recommendations on the Universal Service Proceeding to FCC.                     |
| May 8, 1997                    | FCC completes its proceeding implementing the Joint Board's recommendations on Universal Service. |
| <i>date not yet determined</i> | Comments on the Apple/WINForum NPRM are due.  |
| <i>date not yet determined</i> | Reply comments on the Apple/WINForum NPRM are due.  |

### HOW TO STAY INFORMED

To get the most recent information about FCC proceedings that help bring telecommunications services to schools, use one or more of these methods:

- (1) Keep checking LearNet on the World Wide Web.
- (2) Use the FCC's fax on demand system. Call 202-418-2830 and follow the directions to request that document #8844 be automatically faxed to the number you provide.
- (3) Call 202-418-2399 for a voice mail message about the status of education proceedings.
- (4) E-mail [LearNet@fcc.gov](mailto:LearNet@fcc.gov) to submit comments or ask questions, or call (202) 418-0190.